

## Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, PINS, PROP, GE

SUBJECT: GDR MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE 1976 WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES

1. GDR MEDIA PLAYED THE EXPECTED THEMES FOR THE 1976 WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES AT INNSBRUCK. PRIMARY EMPHASIS WAS, OF COURSE, GIVEN TO THE EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE OF THE GDR TEAM WITH ITS SEVEN GOLD, FIVE SILVER AND SEVEN BRONZE MEDALS. HOURS OF TV PROGRAMMING AND EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE BLANKETED THIS SPORTS-CONSCIOUS COUNTRY. EVERY GOLD MEDAL WON BY THE GDR RECEIVED FULL TV FILMING WITH THE ULTIMATE SCENE IN EACH CASE BEING THE RAISING OF THE GDR FLAG TO THE ACCOMPANYMENT OF THE EAST GERMAN NATIONAL ANTHEM. NONE OF THIS VARIED MUCH FROM OTHER NATIONAL COVERAGES.

2. SPECIAL THEMES WERE THE GLORIFICATION OF SOVIET AND GDR VICTORIES AND "SOCIALIST ATHLETICS AND SPORTS TRAINING PROGRAMS" IN GENERAL AND THE DENIGRATION OF THE VICTORIES OF OTHER (READ NON-SOCIALIST) NATIONAL TEAMS, PARTICULARLY THE FRG. THUS, ROSIE MITTERMAIER OF THE FRG, APPARENTLY ONE OF THE MOST PERSONALLY POPULAR OF THE

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OLYMPIC STARS AND WINNER OF TWO GOLD MEDALS, WAS DESCRIBED

BY GDR TV COMMENTATORS AS BEING "UNUSUALLY ADVANTAGED" BECAUSE HER FATHER REPORTEDLY RUNS A SKIING SCHOOL AND THE SNOW CONDITIONS GVE HER PARTICULAR (READ UNFAIR) HELP.

3. IN SOME INSTANCES, REPORTING ON AMERICAN WINNERS AT THE OLYMPICS WAS CHARACTERIZED BY A RELUCTANCE TO ACCEPT THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS WITH GOOD GRACE. THIS WAS THE CASE WITH PETER MUELLER WHO WON THE 1000 METER SPEED SKATING EVENT. NEUES DEUTSCHLAND REPORTED THAT MUELLER HAD BEEN "PROGRAMMED" TO WIN THIS EVENT BY INTENSIVE TRAINING SPONSORED BY AN AMERICAN FIRM AND BY A DETERMINATION THAT MUELLER HAD THE CORRECT MUSCLE STRUCTURE FOR CONTESTING COMPETITIONS INVOLVING SPEED. BURIED IN THE ARTICLE IS THE STATEMENT THAT THE FOREGOING INFORMATION SHOULD NOT DETRACT FROM MUELLER'S PERFORMANCE. IN GENERAL, MEDIA HANDLING OF OTHER AMERICAN GOLD MEDALISTS WAS RESTRAINED AND POLITE.

4. OUTRAGE AND ANGER AGAINST A MYSTERIOUS "PLOT" CHARACTERIZED GDR MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE CHARGES APPARENTLY CIRCULATED IN ANONYMOUS LETTERS THAT THE GDR BOBSLEDDERS WERE CHEATING BY HEATING THE RUNNERS OF THEIR SLEDS JUST PRIOR TO BEGINNING THEIR RUNS FOR THE RECORD.

5. CONSPICUOUS FOR ITS ABSENCE IN THE GDR MEDIA WAS ANY INFORMATION ABOUT THE DEFECTION OF CLAUS TUCHSCHERER, A GDR SKIER WHO PLACED FIFTH IN THE NORDIC COMBINATION FOR MEN. FRG TV REPORTED THAT TUCHSCHERER REQUESTED AND OBTAINED AN FRG PASSPORT FROM THE FRG CONSULATE GENERAL IN GRAZ.

6. GDR MEDIA COVERED WITH SOME SATISFACTION THE CANCELLATION OF ACCREDITATION OF RFE CORRESPONDENTS COVERING INNSBRUCK EARLY IN THE GAMES. IN THESE STORIES, AS IN OTHERS, RFE IS CHARACTERIZED AS A COLD-WAR, ANTI-DETENTE INSTRUMENTALITY SERVING IMPERIALIST AIMS.

7. COMMENT: THE GDR GAVE VERY HEAVY PLAY TO INNSBRUCK WITH AN ORTHODOX POLITICAL SLANT. IN THIS WAY, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TOO, SPORTS SERVE THE PURPOSES OF THE REGIME. GROVE

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